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Chapter 5 Reflection

Chapter 5 is about how educational philosophy is used in the classroom. Over the course of my educational journey in life I had had many teachers who have taught in diverse ways. Some of the methods they used in their classrooms I have responded well too and enjoyed. Other methods I have no responded well as a learner in. I also believe that a teacher’s personality can affect the quality of learning in the classroom in addition what methods of educational philosophy they use.

One school of educational philosophy that appeals to me is Humanism. Its main goal is to enhance the good within the student. The 18th century French philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s writings are credited in influencing this school of thought. He wrote that, “God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil.” In this way humans are born free to think and choose for themselves but intuitions can restrict this freedom. Humanists believe that most schools de-emphasize the individual student. When students feel more involved in class, they are more likely to respond to the teacher and learn more effectively.

In high school I had an English teacher who used humanistic practices in the classroom. I remember how he was able to relate Shakespeare to plays or themes in them to modern life. This made some of the harder concepts easier to grasp and made reading the plays more engaging. I remember being given a wide variety of choices on whom to complete a project on *Romeo and Juliet*. We formed groups with who we wanted to work with and pick how we would present the material. I had an interest in film so my group was able to do our project in the form of a film where we pretended to be characters from the play. This made me feel more connected to the learning experience and I actually had a lot of fun with it. I believe that this is important to students if they are able to make creative choices within the classroom they will learn more as well.

Another educational philosophy I am attracted too is Constructivism. This emphasizes personal meaning through hands on learning. It encourages critical thinking and understanding large ideas, principals, or themes. The book adds that an outside “hook” can be used to create a learning activity. The example is letter from Steven Spielberg about Jurassic Park and whether or not eh movie was accurate to dinosaurs. The students are tasked to write a response back and this connects it to the large theme of dinosaurs and the movie.

An important statement about Constructivism is that, students learn by shaping their own understanding about their world. The way our educational system is set up does not allow for a truly constructivist experience. School curriculum is very standardized and with more focused placed on high stakes testing this is likely to remain the case. I do believe that we cannot have a completely student centered learning environment because structure is needed or their will be chaos. I do believe that educators should look at the importance in understanding that students will respond better to learning if they have greater creative control over their education.